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An
Inaugural Dissertation
on
Podagra or Gout.
Submitted to the examination
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Podagra or Gout.

One of the most painful and distressing diseases to which the human system is liable is Gout.—

Notwithstanding the disease has been noticed ever since the dawn of Medical Science, and much has been said by different authors concerning the cause of it, yet it still remains to be a matter unsettled, as to the true nature of the disease, and the best mode of treating it.—

The term, Gout, is said to be derived from the French, Goutte, a drop.

The ancients believed that all, or at least most of the diseases accompanied with swelling or tumefaction, were attributable to a flow of morbid humours to the part affected, which was called a defluxion, and the defluxion or rheum, was denominated, Cold, Hot, &c. according to the nature of the different symptoms. and to this cause was ascribed by the Arabian writers, the various diseases of the eyes, which were called Gutta serena, Gutta obsura &c. according to their different appearances.—

Boerhave, considers gout to be a vitiated disposition of the very minute vessels and nerves in the body, from their too great straitness, rigidity; and also of the

liquids which nourishes the nerves from its acrimony and greater tenacity.—

Dr Hoffman says that it is a saline tartarous substance, whilst some considers it a corrosive bilious salt, others an Acids, an earth an Alkali &c

It has generally been thought that the disease depends upon a certain morbific matter always present in the system; and that this matter by certain causes thrown upon the joints and other parts, produces the several phenomena of the disease.—

Doctr. Chapmans opinion is, that the primary seat of Gout is the Stomach, and that it is intimately connected with the Lithic diathesis; and his reasons for adopting this opinion, seem to me, to be substantial.—

These positions he thinks are proven thus:

First, by the causes being such as act principally upon that organ, Secondly, by the disease being generally if not always, preceded or accompanied by some gastric disorder; and thirdly, by our remedies being chiefly directed to that viscus.—

The second position, he thinks substantiated, by the disease being produced by nearly

[illegible] caused with [illegible]
in the [illegible] and in [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] some
[illegible] the [illegible] [illegible]
the [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
many arguments which will [illegible]
to correct [illegible] of Gall's [illegible]
[illegible], and to [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible], [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] with his ideas on this subject.

It is [illegible] understood in the
[illegible] that the [illegible] that
of the [illegible], may be [illegible] [illegible].

[illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible],
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] to the [illegible], and that
this organ being acted upon by
certain stimulants is excited, pri-
marily and [illegible], from which

actions proceeds [illegible] the phenomena of the disease, or gout.

I believe that these impressions are such as always produce debility of the direct, or indirect kinds; and think also that this diathesis or predisposition to gout, sometimes exists in such a degree, that the smallest deviation from strict temperance is sufficient to make it develope itself.

Thus I think sometimes [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] living, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] generally, strictly temperate. I know of no other way of accounting for those anomalous cases which are sometimes met with in practice.

The disease [illegible] very [illegible]

of the facts, that it is not necessary that our parents should have had descended on a particular kind, or to have [illegible] them. If, in our family, we have had children of the same parents, grown up at the same time & child under the same or similar circumstances, contract descending of a different character? No; for instance, will have a family in another Tabernacle, and perhaps a third will be taken with Sinocchus or e.g. chud. These are all minor ones descended of different systems with lectures. — Now how are these characters to be accounted for? In concluding that it must be owing to the necessity, or peculiarity of structure in the matter or system which causes it

necessitates taken our descendants, than we, they which is a defect for our children, we do not inherit from our parents.

2d. In order to be understood by, that we cannot inherit descendants from our parents, I should prove that we are genetically liable to descend, independent from our parents, and that, though generally hereditary, it not always so, and that it may occur in persons living, it cannot be accounted for in any other way, than the one which I have endeavoured to explain.—

It is the opinion of some practitioners that women never have gout. Hippocrates believed that women seldom had this disease, and never before the disappearance of the catamenia. Cullen says it attacks especially the male sex, but sometimes though more rarely the female.

Entertaining the pathological views of the disease which I have endeavoured to explain, I cannot believe that gout is at all influenced by sex, but that if women (in general) were to indulge in the same excesses, and expose themselves to the occasional or exciting causes, they would be equally liable to the disease; That the diathesis is just as likely to exist

in the female, as male sex; and it is only necessary to expose themselves to the same causes, to make this distressing complaint developed itself in all its various phenomena.

I cannot see how those authors can establish the fact, by any train of pathological reasoning, that women are, from any peculiarity of structure less liable to this disease than men; and that eunuchs are entirely exempt from gout: unless they can prove that the primary seat of the disease, is the male organs of generation.

It may be looked upon, as presuming too much, in a young and inexperienced man, to set up his opinion, in opposition to older and more

experienced persons in the profession; and I hope I shall be pardoned if I have differed in opinion with all, or any of you, who have been my instructors; and who have also spared no expense or labour, to instil into the minds of your pupils, the correct principles of the extensive science to which you belong. I hope further that you will look upon what I have ventured to say, on this subject, as not having proceeded from a disposition to advance opinions inimical to those of any member of the faculty: but from a spirit of investigation — and should I be wrong, I am not the first who have erred in venturing an opinion upon the nature of this most singular disease.

Gout has been distinguished into a great many varieties. As Podagra when the disease exists in the feet; Chiragra, in the hands; Rachagra, in the elbow; Gonagra, in the knee; Odontagra in the teeth; Cleisagra, in the articulations of the Clavicles; Omagra, in the articulation of humerus; Rachiagra, in the spine of the back and Ischiagra in the large bones. Now I think it evident from the many varieties into which they have distinguished gout, that the ancients could have known no distinction between this disease or Rheumatism, or if they did, thought it unnecessary to make any as these two diseases resemble each other in a great many re-

injection. I think it is seen that if the following rules are attended to, that generally, there will be but little difficulty in distinguishing gout from rheumatism, although there may occur cases wherein we may find some difficulty in making a just determination.

In the first place we should endeavor to ascertain whether any hereditary predisposition exists; secondly, we should be very particular in learning the symptoms which may have preceded the fit; and thirdly, we should inquire into the sequences of the disease, the parts affected, and whether they are subject to any other disease besides the fit, and the nature of that disease

if any should have existed; all of which circumstances are usually different in the two diseases. In gout we are told that the pain generally attacks the inner side, and is not so apt to shift its situation; but when this does take place it generally attacks the corresponding limb, or perhaps some of the viscera; we are also told that the parts are more red and swollen than in Rheumatism and that the dyspeptic symptoms, which rarely precede rheumatism, are sometimes present, several days before a fit of the gout comes on.

Gout comes on more frequently in the spring of the year and in the beginning of winter; and the period of life at which it most

commonly adheres in from this cause to Gout; when it appears evident that this is more be from medicine owing to the debilitated state in an incommodious or to intemperance.

It is said that gout does not like some chronic diseases wear itself out in repeated attacks, but requires strength with each returning fit, both with regard to the variety of parts which it attacks and to the degree of suffering and duration of the fit.

Gout is divided into several forms, as Tonic and Atonic, or Regular and Irregular, Retrocedent and Misplaced.—

I believe the principal circumstance which distinguishes the

regular, from the other varieties of the disease, is the inflammatory affection of the joints; of the second or atonic form of the disease, there are two varieties: the retrocedent and misplaced;-

A paroxysm of regular gout sometimes comes on without any warning, but most frequently, I believe, the dyspeptic symptoms, with an unusual coldness of the feet and legs, a numbness or a pricking sensation along the extremities, precedes the attack; lassitude and fatigue are experienced in a great degree upon the least exercise, the urine pallid and the bowels costive.-

An attack most commonly comes on at night, or about two or three

o clock in the morning; the patient sometimes goes to bed in tolerable health, and after three or four hours is awaked by the excruciating pain which has attacked the joint of the large toe, heel, or as happens sometimes the whole foot; this increases in violence and is succeeded by rigors and other febrile symptoms with great throbbing and severe inflammation in the part. – Sometimes both feet are affected, but most commonly but one at a time.

Towards day the pain subsides a little and the patient falls asleep; then a gentle sweat breaks out and terminates the paroxysm. a number of which constitute a fit of gout. –

Treatment.

Both one of the causes that tend to cataract cannot always, I fear, be entirely eradicated from the system, yet it is certain that much may be done towards lessening the virulence, and shortening the duration of the disease by the mild mercurialize the inflammation of the cataract, by other remedies than those which I think are the principal ones in Natures self Education.—

In the disease would also be one of the most important measures in the treatment of it, both with a view to removing the primary affection and relieving pain.—

On this account, as well as many other, nature cannot cut the disease short, in a few months terminates

the use is a certain remedy in Cholera Morbus.—

The patient should commence the morning with three drops of Calomel, followed by the Enterobaldimasmus; strain in some cases, where the patient is restless, and the fluids demands it, he repeat it, preceded the morning by venesection.—

The medicines should be kept up so long as the symptoms and the nature of the disease demand it. For the purpose the most active articles have been used, among which are, Cammomile, Rhubarb and Castorium, all of which have proved most decidedly efficacious and may be indispensable to the cure of the disease.—

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in the treatment of gout, and in doubt but they are in some cases of great importance, where there is much gastric disorder.

Sweating is also of great advantage in the treatment of gout, and is considered as some, next in importance to purging; but we should never resort to this, until the violence of the paroxysm is somewhat subdued.—

Diuretics are also indicated in the copious discharge of urine which have been observed as critical in gout, as well as their determined utility in subduing inflammatory action, particularly in rheumatism.—

It is said that all the medicines which have been mentioned may

be met, in the finest nature of the
[illegible] medicine that is not rule
fixed between, but sometimes, nutrit
[illegible] and almost [illegible] increase
the urinary discharge. The condition
of this medicine is still, therefore, un-
known, or at least there is no certainty
of its discovery. —

Certain applications to the in-
flamed parts are very useful and always
to be depended upon. Fomentations recom-
mended, very [illegible] a preparation from
[illegible], in the [illegible] of [illegible]
of the bladder, to be of [illegible] [illegible]
to be very useful [illegible] the
part affected, [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] in [illegible] [illegible] is [illegible] to
the disease, who [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible], and [illegible] that [illegible] [illegible]

give him the least relief; he takes as much as a pint of this in the twenty-four hours.—

Wrapping the inflamed parts in Carded wool, or cotton wool sometimes gives great relief.

Blisters may sometimes be necessary where there is danger of a retrocession; but in such cases the stimulants should be resorted to; as the musk juleb, ether, opium, carbonate of ammonia, hot toddy, &c. The lancet must in some cases be used, even whilst we are giving the stimulants, particularly when the disease attacks the stomach or bowels, and the pulse is depressed. When the head is affected producing Apoplexy it should be treated in the same way as apoplexy from any other

cause. – when it attacks the lungs it produces asthmatic or Pneumonic symtoms and should be treated by the remedies for those diseases. –

When the Kidneies are affected general & local bleeding, warm bath and warm fomentations, Laudanum or opium, Tinct of Colchicum &c should be used. – when the heart is affected, generally, the symtoms of Angina pectoris are felt, as palpitations &c. in this case, bleeding and antispasmodics are demanded, and blisters to the extremities. –

Misplaced Gout, should be treated in the same way as the retrocedent form of the disease, as it is the same thing, but has neglected to make its appearance in the

joints previous to its attacking some other part.

We should treat the atonic form of the disease by restoring tone to the stomach and invigorating the system.

This should be commenced by evacuating the alimentary canal and by Tonics, such as steel, Bark and many of the other tonics which are in use, particularly the bitter tonics.